

*Oral Questions*

threats, and if my hon. friend, the leader of the NDP, believes that Canadians ought to remain indifferent to this callous abuse of liberty and life, the Progressive Conservative government is not among her supporters.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, I suggest that it is not Canadians who are indifferent to what happens in Central America. Canadians want to see peaceful solutions in Central America. They want to see us use the United Nations, the Security Council and the OAS for those purposes.

Mr. Speaker, we too find Noriega reprehensible. We too feel concerned that international efforts have to be made so that democratic government can be restored in Panama.

We also recognize that Noriega was a creation of the American government.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Ms. McLaughlin:** Surely, it was when Mr. Noriega decided not to agree with the American government he became the object of the excuse for an invasion.

I wonder if the American government's actions indicate that this government believes that the U.S., or that any other country, should feel free to invade a country at any time when it disapproves of a government.

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the New Democratic Party are so far removed from the mainstream fundamental values of Canadians, that she has just indicated why they will never, ever, be called upon to form a government in this country.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Has the hon. leader forgotten that there was a democratically elected government in May of this year that was abused, beaten and terrorized by General Noriega and his thugs?

Has the hon. member forgotten that General Noriega is under indictment for drug running and corruption in the United States?

Has the hon. member forgotten that General Noriega authorized the issuance of a declaration of war against the United States, and subsequent thereto American citizens were killed?

The United States of America acted to protect the interests of its nationals. Its conduct is governed by international treaties in respect of Panama. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has said many times that intervention ought to be at all times as a last resort. We believe that in these particular circumstances, the United States of America and the President of the United States acted properly.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, if Canada supports the actions of the American government, does this mean we believe the United States or any other nation is free to use force when it disapproves of a government? What is Canada going to say to the Organization of American States and the UN Security Council about these issues? What about the role of intermediary power that this government wanted Canada to play within the Organization of American States?

This government refuses to condemn U.S. support for the military in Salvador, and it refuses to condemn the American invasion of Panama. Does this mean it has no independent foreign policy?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, my answer to the leadership of the New Democratic Party is the same in French.

General Noriega declared war against the United States. A U.S. citizen was killed by the general's forces and his wife was threatened. The United States intervened following this declaration of war, to protect American citizens living in Panama, and it did so legitimately, by virtue of an international treaty concluded many years ago.

But the New Democrats think there is something repugnant about this, even though the Secretary of State for External Affairs clearly said that this action was taken as a last resort—However, if after a declaration of war and the shooting of a foreign citizen, the leadership of the New Democratic Party still thinks the U.S. reaction is excessive, this government and this country will never be able to support her arguments or external policies.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify a point that the Prime Minister